



Health and Human Services MEDIA RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 16, 2015

Protect your children, immunize them

21st Annual National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) – April 18 -25

SARASOTA COUNTY — The 21st annual National Infant Immunization Week, April 18-25 has been set aside to remind parents that keeping infants and toddlers safe and healthy includes protecting them from 14 serious diseases before age two.

Vaccines are one of public health’s greatest success stories because they prevent serious disease and death. “It’s easy to think diseases like polio, whooping cough, and measles are diseases of the past, but the recent measles outbreak that originated on the west coast of the U.S. and spread to several states is evidence that these diseases do return when we let our guard down,” says Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County (DOH-Sarasota) Medical Director Dr. William Heymann. “Whooping cough outbreaks are also on the rise in many states, including Florida. In the past, we have had extensive ‘herd or community immunity’ to protect those who cannot be vaccinated because they are too young or too ill; however, we are losing that protection as a result of parents opting not to vaccinate due to misinformation about vaccines.”



CDC Image: Mother with healthy baby up-to-date on immunizations

Serious diseases and their complications such as hospitalization, disability and even death may be prevented by following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended vaccine schedule and getting infants, young children and adolescents vaccinated on time. [Click here](#) to view the stories of parents who lost children to vaccine-preventable diseases, because they chose not to vaccinate them.

As immunization is a shared responsibility, families, healthcare professionals and public health officials must work together to help protect the entire community. “Education is the key,” says DOH-Sarasota Immunization Program Manager Donna Keith. “We spend a great deal of time educating parents who come to us seeking reassurance that vaccines are safe and the best way to protect their child against many serious diseases that still impact children, sometimes causing long-term harm or worse. We have a dialogue with them about their concerns and then share the facts about immunizations and the risks to their child and others if they don’t vaccinate.”

-more-



MEDIA NOTES:

DOH-Sarasota Media Contact:

Dianne Shipley, 941-861-2852; cell 941-302-1058; DOHSarasotaNews@flhealth.gov

Website: www.sarasotahealth.org



Health and Human Services MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Parents are also advised to talk with their child’s health care provider or call the Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County (DOH-Sarasota) about the vaccines that their baby or child may need. These professionals can share scientifically-accurate and up-to-date information about vaccines. Parents/guardians are urged to ask at each doctor appointment whether their child is up-to-date on immunizations.

Further Information on immunizations:

Facts for parents about immunizations: (DOH-Sarasota)	http://sarasota.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/clinical-and-nutrition-services/immunizations/immunizations-facts.html
Childhood Immunizations (DOH-Sarasota)	http://sarasota.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/clinical-and-nutrition-services/immunizations/immunizations-child.html
American Pediatric Association	http://www2.aap.org/immunization/
CDC	http://www2a.cdc.gov/nip/kidstuff/newscheduler_le/

The DOH-Sarasota, through the federally funded Vaccines for Children (VFC) program, offers immunizations to eligible children at no cost. No appointment is needed. A parent or legal guardian must be present, and must bring prior shot records. Immunizations are available at the following locations:

William L. Little Health and Human Services Center

941-861-2900
 Immunization Clinic
 2200 Ringling Blvd., Sarasota
 Please call for hours or check the website: www.sarasotahealth.org

North Port Health Center

941-861-3864
 6950 Outreach Way, North Port
 Please call for hours or check the website: www.sarasotahealth.org.

Sarasota County prohibits discrimination in all services, programs or activities. View the complete policy at www.scgov.net/ADA/Pages/default.aspx

-more-



MEDIA NOTES:

DOH-Sarasota Media Contact:

Dianne Shipley, 941-861-2852; cell 941-302-1058; DOHSarasotaNews@flhealth.gov
 Website: www.sarasotahealth.org



Health and Human Services
MEDIA RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA NOTES:

DOH-Sarasota Media Contact:

Dianne Shipley, 941-861-2852; cell 941-302-1058; DOHSarasotaNews@FLHealth.gov

Website: www.sarasotahealth.org



MEDIA NOTES:

DOH-Sarasota Media Contact:

Dianne Shipley, 941-861-2852; cell 941-302-1058; DOHSarasotaNews@flhealth.gov

Website: www.sarasotahealth.org